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EDITORIAL COMMENT



PROGRESS OF REGISTRATION

THE ENGLISH BILL.

We give in the Miscellany an exact reproduction of the English bill for the registration of trained nurses in Great Britain, as it appeared with annotations in italics in the *British Journal of Nursing* under date of December 19.

It should be borne in mind that this bill is national in its scope. In comparison with the brevity and simplicity of our American State bills it seems complicated, but when one has separated the somewhat voluminous details of the constitution of the General Nursing Council from the paragraphs that deal with the actual registration of the nurses the important underlying principles will be found the same. The English nurses accept our title of R.N.—nurses to be registered must be graduates from training-schools *approved* by the General Nursing Council; registration is neither compulsory or prohibitory, but provides simply a means of distinguishing between the really trained nurses who desire protection and the untrained, and the balance of power is under the control of the nurses.

As each country or State secures the passage of laws providing for a legal status of education for nurses the chain of progress grows longer and stronger. When the English bill will have become a law it will embrace all of Great Britain at one superb bound. The United States needs to “keep a-hustling.”

THE MARYLAND BILL.

The bill prepared by the Maryland State Nurses' Association is also given in full in the Official Department. The standards of this bill, both preliminary and professional, are greatly in advance of anything asked for by the other States, and if the bill passes as it is drawn Maryland will lead in professional importance.

This is as it should be. We have said before each State as it comes into line should profit by what the other States have gained and “ask for more.” The little circular of information published on page 409 is the best comment that can be made upon it. We congratulate Maryland.

WHAT OTHER STATES ARE DOING.

Other reports found in the Official Department give some interesting facts in regard to progress of registration. In North Carolina the Examining Board is now getting into active operation, and the general tone from that State seems to be one of encouragement. We hear only the most favorable reports from Virginia. The leaders in the movement there seem to anticipate no interference with their bill before the Legislature, and feel confident that with their policy of going forward slowly and making their requirements for admission very easy in the beginning, they will have no difficulty in gradually establishing such a standard as they feel to be desirable. The report of the New Jersey State meet-

ing shows satisfactory progress. Massachusetts has framed a bill and is practically ready for legislation.

THE NEW YORK EXAMINERS.

The Board of Nurse Examiners of New York State have decided upon the qualifications for the registration of training-schools, both preliminary and professional, and have sent their recommendations to the Board of Regents at Albany. Having decided upon the educational requirements which it should recommend to the Board of Regents, the examiners will now be able to give their undivided attention to the examination of the papers of applicants for registration.

As yet no examination questions have been prepared, nor will any be needed until the June examinations for those applying for examination in practical nursing, of which an announcement was made in the October JOURNAL.

We wish to remind nurses again that the work of the examiners must be slow. In the first place, all of the examiners are engaged in some other occupation and cannot give their undivided attention to the work of the State.

The application papers are very tedious to examine. Some are badly written; many are imperfectly filled out, some applicants even omitting to mention the training-schools from which they have graduated. The great majority of the applicants are absolutely unknown to the examiners, as are also their endorsers.

ABOUT THE PHOTOGRAPH.

Many nurses have written to us to know if a photograph is really necessary. This is a requirement of the Regents' Office and must be complied with, but the cheapest kind of a photograph will answer. Those known as "postal" photographs—four for fifty cents—are being used by many nurses and are perfectly satisfactory.

EXAMINATIONS.

There still seems to be a good deal of misunderstanding on the part of nurses as to what registration really means, and what mode of procedure is necessary, and perhaps it is not strange that many should find the subject difficult to grasp. A more careful study of the bills by the different *alumnæ* associations in all of the States would clear the fog from many minds.

First let us remind our readers that registration will not prevent any woman from continuing to do nursing. It will only prevent her from *using the title* R.N. without registration.

Second, graduates from recognized training-schools are not required to pass an examination provided they apply for registration within three years from the passage of the bill, which will be April, 1906.

Third, nurses who have had three-years' experience in a general hospital where there was no training-school before the passage of the bill are not required to pass an examination.

Fourth, nurses who have been in the actual practice of nursing for three years before the passage of the bill may be registered by passing an examination in practical nursing before April, 1906.

If our readers will turn to page 53 of the October number of the JOURNAL they will find in the report of the first meeting of the examiners issued from the Regents' Office the following:

"The test in practical nursing will include both a practical demonstration and a written test involving the care of febrile cases, of patients before and after an operation, of the mother and new-born babe in normal and abnormal obstetrical cases, of treatment of emergencies, and a knowledge of drugs with regard to toxicological symptoms and treatment after poisonous doses. Male nurses will be examined on genito-urinary work as a substitute for obstetrical cases.

"The practical demonstration will be conducted by a member of the Board of Examiners, who must recommend the applicant for admission to the written test. Both practical demonstration and written test will be held on the dates and at the places prescribed for Regents' examinations in the other professions,—viz., at New York, Albany, Syracuse, and Buffalo, June 21, 1904, January 24, 1905, June 20, 1905."

Up to this time, as we have already stated, the chief work of the examiners has been in studying the curricula of the training-schools applying for registration, and deciding upon what would seem a just minimum requirement for all schools. This work having now been completed, more time will be devoted to the individual applications for registration, and later on to the preparation of the examination questions for the examinations that will take place in June, as stated above. Remember that these examinations are *not* for graduates from recognized schools, but are for men and women whose knowledge has been gained from experience, who desire to prove their fitness for recognition as registered nurses. These examinations will doubtless be of a very simple, practical character.

The whole plan for registration of both training-schools and nurses is based upon what has been done when the other professions were first registered. The idea is to begin with very low standards, that schools not doing good work may have an opportunity to come up, and that all honorable men and women who are earning their living by nursing may not be unjustly deprived of their occupation; then, little by little, as the years go on, the requirements for the schools will be raised, and in this way nurses will be better and more uniformly educated.

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION RECOGNIZES REGISTRATION.

The new rules of the Civil Service Commission of New York, issued under date of December 4, 1903, contain several interesting changes that are of importance to nurses. Under Rule XVIII.,—the non-competitive class,—Section 4 reads, "For the position of trained nurse, when the applicant is a *registered nurse*, under Chapter 293 of the Laws of 1903 a certificate of such registry may, when presented, be accepted in lieu of the examination required herein," etc., and "nurses" are in the non-competitive lists for "positions in Bellevue and allied hospitals" and for "positions in the hospitals for contagious diseases."

We understand that Miss Delano and Miss Gilmour were quietly instrumental in securing this recognition of the registration law by the Civil Service Commission, and in placing trained nurses in the non-competitive list. There will be work of this kind to be done in all States and cities where laws have been passed. Our experience has been that politicians are usually very practical men, quick to see the common-sense side of any question, and ready to listen to intelligent explanations when reasonably presented. It is difficult for the initiated to keep pace with the strides that nursing affairs are making just at this period, and if we expect laymen to give nurses the recognition we are working for, it is our business to see that they understand what nurses want.

TUBERCULOSIS EXPOSITION IN BALTIMORE

THE Tuberculosis Exposition held in Baltimore during the week commencing January 25 included, in addition to the exhibits, a most interesting programme, in which many of the leading specialists in tuberculosis research took part. Among the subjects considered were house infections, tuberculosis in cattle, tuberculosis in animals, the restrictions of tuberculosis, home treatment, etc., etc. The work of nurses was given a recognized place. Miss M. A. Nutting, of the Johns Hopkins Hospital, one of the original committee, made some investigations with regard to house-to-house visiting of tuberculosis patients by nurses, and these reports, with some interesting photographs, were included as part of the exhibit. Miss Nutting has been from the beginning a fervent believer in the house-to-house method of caring for tuberculosis patients, and the data which she will have collected and exhibited at the congress will be the first report of the work of nurses in the prevention and care of tuberculosis patients that has been made in this country. Miss Nutting has promised this material to the JOURNAL, and we hope to be able to give it to our readers at an early date.

THE BERLIN CONGRESS

THIS number of the JOURNAL contains in both the Official Department and Miscellany announcements of the preparations that are being made for the Berlin Congress. There is no doubt but that a large number of nurses are going over from this country, and as the time draws nearer the interest is increasing. Miss Thornton already has promises of at least a party of fifty, and, of course, there are great numbers of nurses who cannot be sure of getting away until later in the season.

We shall be able in a later number to give something more in detail of the programme of the International Congress of Nurses, papers to be read, etc., etc., with perhaps some idea of the amount of entertainment to be expected.

There is such inspiration to be gathered from such conventions, that no one should miss the opportunity who can possibly arrange to go.

It is more than probable that the date of the meeting of the Associated Alumnae will be changed to some time in the early half of May, so that members from the South and West can attend the convention in Philadelphia en route to New York, from which point the party will sail.

THE PENNSYLVANIA MEETING

WE give a very brief outline of the programme of the Pennsylvania State meeting in the Official Department, and we give here a few sentences from Dr. McAllister's address. The nurses were the guests of the Academy of Medicine, and judging from the tone of the address we would infer that the nurses of that State might feel quite sure of the support of the medical profession with the Legislature. Dr. McAllister said in part:

"We are flattered that you have come to our city and that you have chosen our building and our home as your convention place (the Academy of Medicine). It is proper that our home should be your home; you are an essential part of the medical profession; doctor and nurse are both essential to the welfare of the sick. We have the same objects in view—the relief of the sick and suffering and the teaching and enforcing the laws of hygiene and cleanliness. The science and art of medicine and the art of nursing should go hand-in-hand, for it is

undoubtedly true that the results of the physician have greatly improved with the help of the trained nurse, and our gratitude and praise are due her. Therefore as a fellow-worker we welcome you.

"It is right that the nursing profession should have organization. It is as necessary as organization in the medical or other professions. It is not selfish to promote harmony, efficiency, and raise the standard of the profession, and in so doing protect the public. Any legislation in the interest of the art of nursing is also in the interest of the people dependent upon it. I believe it the duty of every competent nurse to be a member of the body and to assist in promoting the law of registration, which is for the protection of the public and for the benefit of the nurse. I can assure you of the earnest support of the medical profession of Harrisburg in your effort to make more useful your profession."

HOSPITAL OF THE ST. LOUIS EXPOSITION

WE are having many letters of inquiry from nurses at a distance asking for information in regard to the service of the St. Louis Exposition Hospital during the coming summer. We are able to state upon official authority that the Nursing Department has not been organized, and probably will not be before the first of April. We are promised an outline of the plan upon which the nursing is to be conducted, which will be published for the benefit of our readers in a later issue.

MATRON TO GO TO SYDNEY

WE want to call the attention of hospital women to the advertisement in the Training-School department for a matron, or, to use our more familiar title, superintendent of a training-school, for the Royal Prince Albert Hospital at Sydney, New South Wales. Here is an opportunity for some able woman to introduce our American system of training into Australasia, and at the same time widen her own horizon. Applications, to reach London before February 28, must be sent quickly.

NURSE TO SPEAK ITALIAN

IN the development of a special branch of work at the Henry Street Settlement, New York, a nurse of the highest grade is needed who speaks Italian.

